



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Governor Ernie Fletcher's Communications Office

For Immediate Release

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Governor Ernie Fletcher Creates State Pipeline Advisory Committee

Governor Directs Committee to Devise Plan to Improve Safety

Frankfort, KY: Governor Ernie Fletcher today called for the creation of a state government advisory committee to study the public health and safety impacts of pipeline accidents in the Commonwealth. Governor Fletcher directed officials from the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet, the Transportation Cabinet, the Office of Homeland Security and Kentucky Emergency Management to serve on the committee and begin work immediately.

The formation of the committee comes after two recent pipeline incidents, including one last November in Floyd County in which nine persons were injured and five homes were destroyed by the explosion of a natural gas liquids pipeline. In January, an oil pipeline spill in the Owen-Carroll County area dumped thousands of gallons of petroleum product into the Kentucky River.

"When I toured the oil spill and saw for myself the environmental damage, I said the state has a role and a responsibility in the area of pipeline safety and security. The formation of this committee fulfills my pledge to take a proactive stance to improve pipeline safety and security in Kentucky," Governor Fletcher said. "I am directing that the committee, representing the agencies involved in pipeline oversight and responding to accidents, review these critical issues

and make recommendations, if appropriate, to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation.”

Interstate pipelines are regulated by agencies of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Under the Federal Pipeline Safety Improvement Act, state advisory committees make recommendations to the federal transportation secretary. The law provides that the transportation secretary has 90 days to respond to any state recommendation and to explain why, or why not, action was taken on recommendations.

Governor Fletcher appointed the following individuals to serve on the Kentucky Pipeline Safety Advisory Committee:

- John Clay, Deputy Secretary of the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet (EPPC), chairman;
- Valerie Hudson, Deputy Commissioner of the Department for Environmental Protection;
- Gene Blair, EPPC Environmental Response Team Supervisor;
- Al Mitchell, State Fire Marshal;
- David Morgan, Director, Division of Water, Department of Environmental Protection;
- Keith Hall, Director, Kentucky Office of Homeland Security
- Public Service Commission senior professional staff;
- Kentucky Emergency Management senior professional staff;
- Transportation Cabinet senior professional staff; and
- An engineer with a background and working knowledge of pipelines to provide technical assistance.

The Kentucky Pipeline Safety Advisory Committee will hold public meetings and be proactive in receiving recommendations from environmental organizations, interested citizens, and industry.

“I expect the committee to be diligent in its efforts to evaluate and identify opportunities to improve pipeline safety and help prevent future tragedies that could take innocent life or degrade the Commonwealth’s natural resources,” Governor Fletcher concluded.